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8		DISTRICT COURT CT OF CALIFORNIA
9	S.G., a minor student, by and through her parents, L.G. and M.G.,	Case No.
11	Plaintiffs,	COMPLAINT FOR DAMAGES: 1. ASSAULT
12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 22 22 23 24	SAN FRANCISCO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT, DONAVAN EAGLE HARPER, MICHAEL ESSIEN, DINORA CASTRO, ANNA ROBERDS, and DOES 1 through 99, inclusive, Defendants.	 BATTERY FALSE IMPRISONMENT INTENTIONAL INFLICTION OF EMOTIONAL DISTRESS SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN VIOLATION OF THE UNRUH CIVIL RIGHTS ACT VIOLATION OF EDUCATION CODE §\$201(C), 212.5 VIOLATION OF EDUCATION CODE §\$201(F), 212.5 NEGLIGENCE PER SE (VIOLATION OF PENAL CODE §11166) NEGLIGENT SUPERVISION 10. NEGLIGENT TRAINING 11. NEGLIGENT HIRING/RETENTION 12. VIOLATION OF TITLE IX, 20 U.S.C. §1681(A) VIOLATION OF 42 U.S.C. §1983 – AGAINST HARPER

COMPLAINT FOR DAMAGES - 1

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Based upon information and belief available to S.G., L.G. and M.G. (collectively "Plaintiffs") at the time of the filing of this Complaint, Plaintiffs make the following allegations:

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

- 1. This Court has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1331 and 28 U.S.C. §1367.
- Venue is proper in the Northern District of California pursuant to 28 U.S.C.
 §1391 because the events and/or omissions giving rise to the claims occurred within this
 District and where Plaintiffs and Defendants reside.

INTRADISTRICT ASSIGNMENT

3. This case is properly assigned to the San Francisco Division of this Court because the action arises from events that occurred in the counties covered by the San Francisco Division as described Northern District Local Rule 3-2(e).

FACTS

- 4. Plaintiff S.G. was a sixth-grade student at Martin Luther King Junior Middle School for the first semester of the 2016-2017 school year and the beginning of the second semester of the 2016-2017 school year.
- 5. Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School ("MLK") is part of the San Francisco Unified School District ("SFUSD").
- 6. A significant number of students at MLK come from homes where English is not the primary language spoken at home.
 - 7. S.G.'s parents', L.G. and M.G.'s first language is Spanish.
- 8. Defendant DONAVAN EAGLE HARPER ("HARPER") was a physical education teacher at MLK during the 2016-2017 school year.

- 9. Plaintiff S.G., at eleven years of age, was repeatedly sexually assaulted by Defendant HARPER during the first semester of the 2016-2017 school year.
- 10. Defendant HARPER assisted S.G. with her homework during Defendant ANNA ROBERDS' ("ROBERDS") math class. While assisting S.G., Defendant HARPER frequently engaged in grooming behavior, i.e., behavior designed to befriend a child and establish an emotional connection in order to lower the child's inhibitions for child sexual abuse. For example, Defendant HARPER gave S.G. extra help on homework, showered her with compliments, asked her about her interests, encouraged her to eat healthy and told S.G. he cared for her.
- 11. While assisting S.G. with her homework in Defendant ROBERDS' class,

 Defendant HARPER's grooming behavior quickly transitioned into sexually-based physical contact, such as hugging, sitting close to S.G. while providing in-class assistance and petting or rubbing the middle of S.G.'s back.
- 12. While assisting S.G. with her homework in Defendant ROBERT's class, Defendant HARPER'S sexually-based physical contact quickly escalated to sexual abuse in the form of Defendant HARPER caressing and stroking S.G.'s hip, running his fingers through her hair, playing with her ear lobes, sitting inappropriately close to S.G. so that his thighs touched her thighs, caressing her back, pressing his body against hers and wrapping his arms around her without consent, and stroking her breasts.
- 13. Defendant HARPER's predatory behavior towards S.G. continued to escalate. For example, Defendant HARPER attempted to isolate S.G. from her friends and would wait for S.G. before school.
 - 14. During school Defendant HARPER would call S.G.'s name to get her attention

1	and then blew kisses at her.
2	15. Defendant HARPER threatened to hurt S.G.'s family if she disclosed the sexual
3	abuse.
4	16. Defendant HARPER was not secretive about his sexual abuse of S.G. In plain
5	daylight, many of S.G.'s peers witnessed Defendant HARPER's sexual abuse of S.G.
6	17. On mornings where Defendant HARPER was waiting for S.G., S.G., out of
7	extreme fear, would try to run past or around Defendant HARPER.
8	18. After school, S.G. stayed on campus to play soccer with friends. Defendant
9	HARPER stalked her and coerced her into conversation and sexually inappropriate touching.
-0	19. S.G. attempted to avoid Defendant HARPER to elude his advances.
1	20. On October 16, 2016, MLK Assistant Principal DINORA CASTRO
_2	("CASTRO") called S.G. to her office to request statements from her and four other victims
13	of HARPER's sexual abuse. On information and belief, Principal MICHAEL ESSIEN
4	("ESSIEN") was informed of these meeting with student victims or had reasonable suspicion
.5	that these meeting were taking place.
16	21. During the October 16, 2016 meeting, Defendant CASTRO claimed she would
_7	call S.G.'s parents to discuss the sexual abuse.
8_	22. Defendant CASTRO did not directly call S.G.'s parents. Defendant CASTRO
_9	instructed S.G. to call her mother, M.G., to inform her that that Defendant CASTRO needed
20	M.G. to come in to speak with Defendant CASTRO.
21	23. Nine days later, on October 25, 2016, MLK sent a letter home to parents.
22	Notably, the letter was in English and failed to notify parents that the letter was available in
23	Spanish on the school's website. Furthermore, MLK further victimized S.G. and the other
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1	abuse.	
2	33. M.G. met with a Mr. Ramon Martinez from SFUSD. Mr. Martinez reported that	
3	S.G.'s school record did not contain a report or any formal documentation of Defendant	
4	HARPER's sexual assault of S.G.	
5	34. Mr. Martinez informed M.G. she was obligated to obtain a letter from MLK	
6	approving and verifying a reason for the school transfer.	
7	35. When M.G. sought MLK's approval for S.G.'s transfer, MLK staff were cold and	
8	unsupportive towards M.G.	
9	36. MLK's transfer paperwork for S.G. did not list Defendant HARPER's sexual	
10	abuse as the reason for transfer.	
11	37. After learning of S.G.'s intention to transfer schools, S.G.'s peer group bullied	
12	her.	
13	38. S.G.'s peer group frequently told her to leave MLK and socially isolated her.	
14	39. S.G. frequently returned home in tears due to a combination of the harsh	
15	treatment she received from her peer group and the shame she felt from Defendant	
16	HARPER's sexual abuse.	
17	40. On S.G.'s last day of school at MLK, her peers refused to say goodbye to her and	
18	excluded her throughout the day.	
19	41. After Defendant HARPER's sexual abuse of S.G., she became socially isolated	
20	and rarely communicates or spends time with friends.	
21	42. Defendant HARPER's sexual abuse of S.G. exacerbated by MLK and Defendant	
22	SFUSD's failure to address Defendant HARPER's abuse of S.G. after the sexual abuse has	
23	significantly negatively impacted S.G. and her family.	
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1	HARPER. S.G. often does not eat lunch at school. S.G.'s interest in food is replaced by
2	feelings of anxiety.
3	54. S.G. believes the sexual abuse she experienced is her fault and she feels shame
4	and guilt that it happened.
5	55. S.G.'s birthday was this past November. S.G. told her parents she did not want a
6	party. S.G. stated that for her "birthdays don't exist anymore."
7	56. Once a gregarious and affable young lady, S.G. now spends most of her time
8	alone.
9	57. S.G.'s parents worry that she will self-harm due to her significant sadness and
0	anger. They frequently check-in with her out of fear for her well-being.
1	58. S.G. was once a doting daughter and a role model for her two younger siblings.
12	Now, she is experiencing increasing irritability, anger, and engaging in frequent
_3	noncompliance with parental assigned tasks.
4	59. For example, S.G. becomes angry and lashes out at her parents when they ask he
_5	to do a chore. After being asked to do the dishes, S.G. replied to her mother, "when you die
16	I won't care."
_7	60. S.G. had a special bond with her father. S.G. used to make handmade and
8_	handwritten cards for her father. Now, S.G. avoids him altogether.
_9	61. S.G. avoids eye-contact, eats her meals in silence and gives one-word answers to
20	questions directed to her by her family.
21	62. Whereas S.G. used to play with her younger siblings, now she projects her anger
22	on her younger siblings by hitting them. When S.G.'s siblings try to hug her, she screams
23	and becomes physically aggressive towards them.
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1	63.	S.G.'s parents no longer demand or expect her to do anything to help out the
2	family.	
3	64.	S.G. has nightmares and night terrors of HARPER's sexual abuse.
4	65.	Plaintiffs submitted a timely claim to Defendant SFUSD relating to Plaintiffs'
5	injuries al	lleged herein pursuant to Government Code Section 905. On or about April 3, 201
6	Defendan	t SFUSD mailed Plaintiffs a rejection of claims.
7	FIRST C	CLAIM FOR RELIEF – Assault Against Defendants, HARPER and SFUSD
8	66.	Plaintiffs incorporate all preceding paragraphs as though fully set forth herein.
9	67.	By engaging in the conduct and by doing the acts herein described, Defendant
10	HARPER	acted intending to cause harmful or offensive contact.
11	68.	With reference to the allegations of physical contact by Defendant HARPER
12	described	herein, S.G. reasonably believed she was about to be touched in a harmful or
13	offensive	manner.
14	69.	With reference to the allegations of physical contact by Defendant HARPER
15	described	herein, S.G. did not consent to Defendant HARPER's conduct.
16	70.	With reference to the allegations described herein, S.G. was harmed as follows:
17		A. She suffered pain, inconvenience and severe emotional distress.
18		B. She incurred medical expenses.
19		C. She will incur future medical expenses to treat the effects of Defendants'
20	condu	act.
21	71.	Defendant HARPER's conduct, as alleged herein, was a substantial factor in
22	causing S	.G. harm, as alleged herein.
23	72.	Defendant HARPER acted, as alleged herein, with intent to cause injury or with
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1	willful a	nd knowing disregard of the rights or safety of S.G.
2	73.	Defendant HARPER's conduct, as alleged herein, is deplorable and subjected
3	S.G. to c	ruel and unjust hardship with knowing disregard of her rights such that S.G. is
4	entitled t	o an award of punitive damages against Defendant HARPER in an amount sufficient
5	to punish	n him and deter others from similar acts.
6	74.	Defendant SFUSD ratified Defendant HARPER's conduct, as alleged herein.
7	75.	Defendant SFUSD is vicariously liable for Defendant HARPER's conduct.
8	SECOND	CLAIM FOR RELIEF – Battery Against Defendants, HARPER and SFUSD
9	76.	Plaintiffs incorporate all preceding paragraphs as though fully set forth herein.
10	77.	Defendant HARPER touched S.G., as alleged in this Complaint, with the intent to
11	harm or offend her.	
12	78.	S.G. did not consent to the touching as alleged herein.
13	79.	S.G. was harmed and offended by Defendant HARPER's conduct as alleged in
14	this Com	plaint.
15	80.	A reasonable person in S.G.'s situation would be offended by the touching, as
16	alleged in this Complaint.	
17	81.	Defendant SFUSD ratified Defendant HARPER's conduct, as alleged herein.
18	82.	Defendant SFUSD is vicariously liable for Defendant HARPER's conduct.
19	THIRD CLAIM FOR RELIEF – False Imprisonment Against Defendants, HARPER and	
20		<u>SFUSD</u>
21	83. Plain	tiffs incorporate all preceding paragraphs as though fully set forth herein.
22	84. Defe	ndant HARPER intentionally deprived S.G. of her freedom of movement by threat
23	of fo	rce as alleged above.
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	COMPLAINT	FOR DAMAGES - 1

1	85. S.G. did not consent to the acts of Defendant HARPER as alleged herein.
2	86. S.G. was actually harmed by Defendant HARPER's acts, as alleged herein.
3	87. Defendant HARPER's conduct, as alleged herein, was a substantial factor in causing
4	S.G.'s harm.
5	88. Defendant SFUSD ratified Defendant HARPER's conduct, as alleged herein.
6	89. Defendant SFUSD is vicariously liable for Defendant HARPER's conduct.
7	FOURTH CLAIM FOR RELIEF – Intentional Infliction of Emotional Distress Against <u>Defendants, HARPER and SFUSD</u>
8	90. Plaintiffs incorporate all preceding paragraphs as though fully set forth herein.
9	91. Defendant HARPER's conduct, as alleged in this Complaint, was outrageous.
1	92. By engaging in the conduct and by doing the acts described herein, Defendant
_2	HARPER intended to cause S.G. emotional distress.
13	93. By engaging in the conduct and by doing the acts described herein, Defendant
_4	HARPER acted with reckless disregard that S.G. would suffer emotional distress, knowing
_5	that S.G. was present when the conduct occurred.
L 6	94. S.G. suffered severe emotional distress as a result of Defendant HARPER's
_7	conduct as alleged in this Complaint.
8_	95. Defendant HARPER's conduct, as alleged in this Complaint, was a substantial
_9	factor in causing S.G. severe emotional distress.
20	96. Defendant SFUSD ratified Defendant HARPER's conduct, as alleged herein.
21	97. Defendant SFUSD is vicariously liable for Defendant HARPER's conduct.
22	FIFTH CLAIM FOR RELIEF - Sexual Harassment in Violation of the Unruh Civil Rights Act, Civil Code §51.9, Against Defendants, HARPER and SFUSD
23	98. Plaintiffs incorporate all preceding paragraphs as though fully set forth herein.

1	99.	A professional relationship of teacher and student existed between Defendant
2	HARPER	and S.G.
3	100.	Defendant HARPER engaged in sexual advances, demands for sexual
4	complian	ce by S.G. and engaged in other verbal, visual and physical conduct or a sexual
5	nature or	of a hostile nature based on gender.
6	101.	S.G. did not welcome Defendant HARPER's conduct and his conduct was
7	pervasive	and severe.
8	102.	Given S.G.'s status as a minor, compulsory education requirement and the
9	overall in	abalance in power between S.G. and Defendant HARPER, S.G. could not easily
10	terminate the relationship.	
11	103.	S.G. has suffered and continues to suffer as a result of Defendant HARPER's
12	sexual assault and battery by way of emotional distress, violation of the Unruh Civil Rights	
13	Act, Civil Code §51.9.	
14	104.	Defendant SFUSD ratified Defendant HARPER's conduct, as alleged herein.
15	105.	Defendant SFUSD is vicariously liable for Defendant HARPER's conduct.
16 17	SIXTH CI	LAIM FOR RELIEF – Violation of Education Code §§210(c), 212.5 Against Defendants, HARPER and SFUSD
18	106.	Plaintiffs incorporate all preceding paragraphs as though fully set forth herein.
19	107.	As set forth in this Complaint, Defendant HARPER subjected S.G. to unwanted
20	and haras	sing conduct because she was a female student.
21	108.	The alleged harassing conduct was severe and pervasive.
22	109.	A reasonable female student in S.G.'s position would have considered the
23	school en	vironment to be hostile or abusive by virtue of the acts and conduct alleged herein.
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- 120. Defendants SFUSD, HARPER, ESSIEN, CASTRO, and ROBERDS were "mandated reporters" as the term is defined by Penal Code §11165.7.
- 121. The acts of Defendant HARPER, as alleged in the preceding paragraphs, constituted child abuse and neglect as defined in Penal Code §11165.6.
- 122. Defendants HARPER, ESSIEN, CASTRO, and ROBERDS had a duty, pursuant to Penal Code §11166, to make a report to an agency specified in Penal Code §11165.9 because they, in their professional capacity or within the scope of their employment, had knowledge of or observed that S.G. was reasonably suspected to be the victim of child abuse or neglect. S.G. was an intended beneficiary of Defendants HARPER, ESSIEN, CASTRO, and ROBERDS' duty of care.
- 123. Based upon information and belief, plaintiffs allege that Defendants HARPER, ESSIEN, CASTRO, and ROBERDS breached their duty of care established by Penal Code §11166 by failing to report the incident to a proper agency as soon as practicably possible and by failing to make a written follow-up report within 36 hours of reporting the incident.
- 124. The acts and omissions of Defendants HARPER, ESSIEN, CASTRO, and ROBERDS, as alleged herein, was a substantial factor in causing S.G.'s harm as alleged herein because had Defendants HARPER, ESSIEN, CASTRO, and ROBERDS acted in accordance with their duty of care after they had knowledge of or reasonability suspected, the child abuse and neglect would not have occurred.
 - 125. Defendant SFUSD ratified Defendant HARPER's conduct, as alleged herein.
 - 126. Defendant SFUSD is vicariously liable for Defendant HARPER's conduct.

NINTH CLAIM FOR RELIEF - Negligent Supervision Against Defendant, SFUSD

127. Plaintiffs incorporate all preceding paragraphs as though fully set forth herein.

1	128.	Defendant SFUSD had and has a duty of care to properly supervise its
2	employee	es.
3	129.	Defendant SFUSD negligently supervised Defendants HARPEER, ROBERDS
4	and DOE	S 1-99. Despite HARPER's inconspicuous and brazen sexual abuse of S.G. in
5	Defendan	at ROBERDS' classroom and on school grounds, Defendant SFUSD's teachers
6	and admi	nistrators failed to intervene on S.G.'s behalf for approximately five months.
7	130.	Defendant SFUSD's alleged conduct was a substantial factor in causing S.G.'s
8	harm.	
9	TENTH	CLAIM FOR RELIEF - Negligent Training Against Defendant, SFUSD
10	131.	Plaintiffs incorporate all preceding paragraphs as though fully set forth herein.
11	132.	SFUSD had and has a duty of care to properly train its employees, including
12	Defen	ndants ESSIEN, CASTRO, ROBERDS, and DOES 1 through 99.
13	133.	Plaintiffs, upon information and belief, allege that Defendant SFUSD
14	neglig	gently trained Defendants ESSIEN, CASTRO, ROBERDS, and DOES 1 through
15	99 by	failing to ensure that they were properly trained to perform the duties required by
16	Penal	Code §11166, Education Code §200, et seq., regarding prevention of sexual
17	harass	sment, and SFUSD Board Policies 5141. 4 and 5145.7 regarding prevention of
18	child	abuse and sexual harassment.
19	134.	SFUSD's alleged conduct was a substantial factor in causing S.G. harm.
20	ELEVENT	TH CLAIM FOR RELIEF – Negligent Hiring/Retention Against Defendant,
21	125	SFUSD Disjutiffs incorporate all preceding personable as though fully set forth herein
22	135.	Plaintiffs incorporate all preceding paragraphs as though fully set forth herein. Defordent SELISD had and has a duty of some to graphed him and retain its.
23	136.	Defendant SFUSD had and has a duty of care to properly hire and retain its
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1 employees.

137. Plaintiffs, upon information and belief, allege that SFUSD negligently hired and retained Defendants HARPER, ESSIEN, CASTRO, ROBERDS, and DOES 1 through 99, in addition to the acts incorporated herein, failing to ascertain when they were hired whether they could properly perform their duties required by Penal Code §11166, Education Code §200, et seq., regarding prevention of sexual harassment, and SFUSD's Board Policies 5141. 4 and 5145.7 regarding prevention of child abuse and sexual harassment and by failing to use reasonable care to ascertain during the course of their employment that they were capable and willing to perform said duties.

138. Defendant SFUSD's conduct, as alleged herein, was a substantial factor in causing S.G.'s harm.

TWELFTH CLAIM FOR RELIEF – Violation of Title IX, 20 U.S.C. §168(a) Against <u>Defendant, SFUSD</u>

- 139. Plaintiffs incorporate all preceding paragraphs as though fully set forth herein.
- 140. The conduct alleged herein by Defendant HARPER violated Title IX, 20 U.S.C. §1681(a) which prohibits any person on the basis of sex be subject to discrimination under education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.
- 141. Plaintiffs, upon information and belief, allege Defendant SFUSD is a recipient of federal financial assistance.
- 142. Plaintiffs, upon information and belief, allege school officials, including, but not limited to, Defendants ESSIEN, CASTRO, and DOES 1 through 99, and others, had authority to institute corrective measures against Defendant HARPER on behalf of Defendant SFUSD.

- 143. Plaintiffs, upon information and belief, allege school officials, including but not limited to, Defendants ESSIEN, CASTRO, and DOES 1 through 99, and others, had actual notice of Defendant HARPER's misconduct.
- 144. Plaintiffs, upon information and belief, allege, after gaining actual notice of Defendant HARPER's misconduct, school officials with authority to institute corrective measures against Defendant HARPER on behalf of Defendant SFUSD, including Defendants ESSIEN, CASTRO, and DOES 1 through 99 and others, were deliberately indifferent to Defendant HARPER's misconduct and failed to institute corrective measures against Defendant HARPER thereby permitting Defendant HARPER to continue to discriminate against and sexually harass S.G.

THIRTEENTH CLAIM FOR RELIEF – Violation of 42 U.S.C. §1983 Against Defendant, HARPER

- 145. Plaintiffs incorporate all preceding paragraphs as though fully set forth herein.
- 146. Plaintiffs sue Defendant HARPER in his individual capacity.
- 147. In doing the acts alleged herein, Defendant HARPER was acting or purporting to act in the performance of his official duties, that is, he misused power he possessed by virtue of state law and made possible only because he was clothed with the authority of state law, and thus acted under color of state law.
- 148. Defendant HARPER's conduct as described herein violated S.G.'s rights guaranteed by the United States Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, to be free from sexual discrimination and sexual harassment.

JURY DEMAND

Plaintiffs demand a jury trial on all triable issues.

1 PRAYER FOR RELIEF 2 WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs pray that the Court enter a judgment against the Defendants on 3 their behalves for the following: 4 1. For compensatory damages according to proof, 5 2. An award of punitive damages against Defendant HARPER, in an amount sufficient to 6 make an example of and punish him. 7 3. For reasonable attorneys' fees incurred pursuing Plaintiffs' rights pursuant to applicable 8 statutes authorizing such attorneys' fees, incurred pursuing Plaintiffs' rights, 9 4. For an award of costs incurred prosecuting this action, 10 5. For such other and further relief allowed under the law or as this Honorable Court deems 11 just and equitable. 12 13 DATED this 2nd Day of October, 2017 14 15 **MALLISON & MARTINEZ** 16 17 /s/ Marco A. Palau Attorneys for Plaintiffs 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 COMPLAINT FOR DAMAGES - 1